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1750

BROWN, T.

AN
ADDRESS
IN CHRISTIAN LOVE,
TO THE
Inhabitants of Philadelphia;
ON THE
AWFUL DISPENSATION
OF THE
YELLOW FEVER,
In 1798.

By THADDEUS BROWN.

Before him went the Pestilence.

Habak. III. 5.

Knowing therefore, the terror of the Lord, we persuade men.

II. Cor. V. 11.

That the generation to come, might know.

Psalms. LXXVIII. 6.

Philadelphia:

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1798.



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P R E F A C E.

READER,

MANKIND, when addressed upon interesting subjects, usually wish to know something of the person, and his motives, by whom they are addressed.

THIS necessary information, when sufficiently obtained, generally removes all grounds of deception and consequent dissatisfaction.

IN conformity to these sentiments, the Author of the following Address, informs the Reader, that, he has constantly resided in the City, during the calamity of 1793, 1797, and the present year: and, has seen, felt, and suffered much, therein: which, from time to time, has given rise to various observations and reflections, that are here presented to public view.

THE principal objects, of this publication, are neither fame, nor pecuniary emoluments: subjects of far greater magnitude and consequence; the glory of

God—the reformation and salvation of the inhabitants of this City—the good of mankind—and, his own peace of mind—have, as far as he knows his own heart, been his leading motives.

IN attempting a work of this kind, many discouragements have arisen; particularly a sense of unsuitness and inability; but knowing the terrors of the Lord, and feeling a woe from God denounced against him, if he did not, in this way, endeavour to persuade men to repentance; he has endeavoured to comply, under a constraining sense of religious duty; desiring to commit its effects to God, who is able to carry on his designs in whatever way he pleases; and, does frequently make use of weak, and apparently very unlikely means, to answer important and beneficial purposes.

Philadelphia, 11th mo. (Nov.) 1, 1798.*

* The author professes unity, in religious sentiments, with friends; though he is not, an acknowledged member of their society.

AN ADDRESS, &c.

FEELING, as I apprehend, an ardent desire for the promotion of the cause of truth and righteousness in the earth; and viewing the present dispensation—as,

First, A Judgment from God, *Secondly*, A Judgment mixed with mercy. *Thirdly*, A Judgment designed for the punishment of sin; and the reformation and benefit of mankind.—And *Fourthly*, As a Judgment, that, unless suitably attended to, will probably be followed by more vindictive tokens of divine displeasure.

I SHALL, in attending to this Judgment, under this fourfold view, intreat you in the first place, to view it as coming from God. Oh, the duty, the indispensable duty of professed christians to acknowledge God, not only in all their own, but in all his ways.

IN times of calamity, especially such as the present, as well as in prosperity; the enemy of all righteousness, is busy, very busy, not only with the openly wicked and profane; but, also, not unfrequently, with the more thoughtful and conscientious; if possible, to bewilder and divert their minds from the truth; thereby to deprive
God

God of the glory, and mankind of the benefit, that would otherwise ensue. And no marvel the enemy is thus busy! for of all the dispensations of divine providence, perhaps, none has a more direct tendency to bring the mind home to God. than the present if rightly understood: but this will be more fully considered in its proper place.

Nor only the grand adversary immediately, but likewise worldly wisdom instrumentally, serves to perplex and obscure divine truths, agreeably to that scripture declaration "The world by wisdom knew not God."* Neither does it by its own wisdom clearly understand his operations, either in a way of Judgment or mercy.

THE holy scriptures, in relating God's Judgments upon Pharaoh, and the Egyptians, mention the instrumentality of Moses and Aaron, and the Rod of God, &c. in bringing and oftentimes in removing most of the dispensations, excepting the pestilence. In that, nothing of the instrumentality of Moses or Aaron appear to have been employed; but the immediate Hand of God, or his destroying angel, dealt the avenging, the irresistible blow. Some of the dispensations were attempted to be imitated and accounted for, by the magicians, and other wise men of Egypt, by natural causes. But the pestilence, or plague, was a dispensation; the Egyptians, and even the

hard hearted Pharaoh viewed as coming immediately from God, and bowed before it as such, and obeyed the Lord by letting his people depart, according to his commands.*

THE scriptures also in relating the plague that was sent upon the Philistines for detaining the ark of God, mention it, not only as sent by the immediate Hand of God; but, as so viewed by the Philistines themselves, at least by their priests and diviners, when they advised them to give glory to the God of Israel; and not to harden their hearts, as the Egyptians and Pharaoh had done. And though it seems these priests and diviners, afterwards, got into a doubting state, (like some at the present day) concerning the great evil, that happened unto them; whether it was the Hand of the Lord? or something, that came upon them by chance? Yet God, in the course of his providence, caused their own predictions to be verified in such a manner, as to prove beyond a doubt, that his hand and not a blind chance directed the plague that was upon the Philistines and their lords; for removing and obstructing the institutions of his worship.†

DAVID in scriptures stiled a man after God's own heart viewed the pestilence as coming immediately from the hand of God; for when famine, war, and pestilence, were proposed unto him, for his

* Exod. vii. xii.

† 1 Samuel, v. vi:

his selection or choice, he chose the pestilence in preference to either of the other calamities, as he viewed it under the more immediate agency and direction of the most high.

AND when the pestilence came, and David was permitted to see the cause of the people's destruction; nothing either from the air, or from any other of the long train of second causes seemed to claim any share therein, but the angel of the Lord appeared to be the immediate dispenser of death*.

So in the case of Sennacherib, King of Assyria, who by his messenger, reproached the living God; and by himself and his army threatened to bring destruction upon Jerusalem: blasphemously entertaining and expressing unbelief of God's power and sufficiency to deliver the people that trusted in him:—The pestilence destroyed the army of this blasphemous and unbelieving King.—By means of second causes? No they fell by the immediate hand of the angel of God:—Who in one night, a fatal night! smote with death, One Hundred and Eighty Five Thousand!†

OTHER instances, might be mentioned from scripture to prove the immediate and direct agency of the Almighty in the pestilence, without the intervention of that train of second causes, so commonly instrumental in the generating and promoting of most other diseases: But, the foregoing,
being

* 2 Samuel. xxxiv.

† Isaiah. xxxvi. xxviii.

being (I think) so much in point; and as, I wish to study brevity as far as consistent with perspicuity, I shall not enlarge from scripture under, this head.

COMMON history, if consulted, would no doubt in many instances, confirm the belief of God's immediate agency, in all dispensations like the present; but I shall now confine my observations principally to what relates immediately to this city.

SOMETHING like a specimen of the present calamity, was foreseen*, foretold and realized; more than half a century past: but a kind providential language seemed to be; how shall I give thee up, O Philadelphia!

BUT in 1793, an alarm was sounded! A trumpet of divine displeasure blown! A dispensation sent! Before which, the loftiness of man, was bowed down, the haughtiness of men laid low and the Lord alone was exalted, with many in that day. The men of knowledge, the men of science, the men of the wisdom of this world, attempted to fathom the cause, but most of them failed; their assertions in some instances were not strictly true, convincing to others, or satisfactory to their own minds. The first report of common fame, (which sometimes speaks true) was, "The plague has broke out in Water-street."

ON some of those fatal days, about the 10th of the 10 Month (October) 1793: when all faces gathered

* See Thomas Chalkley's Journal, page 205.

thered blackness, the bands of society seemed dissolving, and human nature shuddered and almost sunk under feeling apprehensions of God's withdrawing his support, his presence, and his protection from this city: Who, then doubted of his immediately directing the dreadful scourge?

MOST, if not all, were convinced it was a judgment sent by the immediate hand of God:—And that nothing but the same hand or power could remove it.

MANY were brought very low, the prevailing language then was, Lord, save me! Only carry me through this dispensation alive, and I will serve thee forever!

THE Lord heard—In the midst of wrath, he remembered mercy—The disorder stopt—By what means? By the Lord's saying to the destroying Angel which smote the people; It is enough; stay now thine hand.

MY soul is often humbly affected both for myself and others on account of broken covenants: did professors of religion; or others keep their covenants made, in those hours of sore distress and bitterness of soul, from the lowest depths of woe with Almighty God?

THE succeeding more than usual pomp and parade of fashion—The unabated, increased and the insatiable thirst after riches, vanities, sinful pleasures and vain amusements: shewed but too plainly, great forgetfulness—great neglect—great unmindfulness,

unmindfulness, of what was past, and great danger of what was to come.

THE widow's gloom was scarcely removed—parents tears had not ceased to flow—nor the relatives sigh, forgot to heave; in remembrance of last year's* calamity; when the dread alarm again assailed our tingling ears---approached our affrighted habitations---and siezed our troubled minds. Plainly shewing, that God has neither lost his power; nor sin, its offensive and destroying nature.

HERE, let us make a solemn pause! stand still! and, view the wonderful works of God! and behold what desolations sin hath made in the City: swept as it were with the besom of destruction!

ARE not the scriptures of truth, the revelations of God to his servant John,† in part fulfilling and verified in this dispensation. Where now are the rulers of the earth, the great men---the rich men---the chief of captains---the mighty men--the bond man---the free man? may not many of them be said, as it were, to have hid themselves, in the dens, and in the rocks of the mountains? saying by their conduct, to the mountains and rocks, fall on us, and hide us, from the face of him, that sitteth on the throne, and from the wrath of the lamb: for the great day of his wrath is come: and, who shall be able to stand?

B ARE

* 1797.

† Rev. vi. 15, 16, 17.

ARE not some of the prophecies of Isaiah,* respecting the jews, verified as concerning this city? Hath not the Lord, the Lord of hosts, taken away from Philadelphia; the mighty man, and the man of war, the judge and the prophet, and the prudent and the ancient, the captain of fifty, and the honourable man, and the counsellor, and the cunning artificer, and the eloquent orator? Hath not the Lord made the city empty and waste, and turned it upside down, and scattered abroad the inhabitants thereof? And is it not, as with the people, so with the priest: as with the servant, so with his master; as with the maid, so with her mistress, as with the buyer, so with the seller; as with the lender, so with the borrower; as with the taker of usury, so with the giver of usury to him?

Is not this city defiled under the inhabitants thereof; because they have transgressed the laws, changed the ordinance, broken the everlasting covenant? And therefore, hath not the curse devoured the city, and they that dwell therein are desolate; and few men left? Hath not the mirth of tabrets ceased, the noise of them that rejoice ended, the joy of the harp ceased? Is not the city of confusion broken down? Is not almost every house shut up, that no man may come in? Is not the city left desolate, and the borders thereof smitten with destruction?

HAS

* Isaiah. iii. xxiv.

HAS not the state of the city, in some measure, been similar to the lamentable situation of Jerusalem, as described by the prophet Jeremiah? Does not the city sit solitary, that was full of people? Is she not become as a widow? She that was great among the states! and Princess among the provinces! Have not the ways of Philadelphia mourned; because so few came to her solemn feasts? Are not her gates desolate? Have not her priests sighed? Her virgins been afflicted? And did not the adversaries see her, and mock at her sabbaths?

Is it nothing to you, all ye that pass by? Behold and see if there be any sorrow like unto our sorrow, which is done unto us, wherewith the Lord hath afflicted us in the day of his fierce anger.

AGAIN, how solemn, how earnest, was the prophet Isaiah, in his denunciation upon, and expostulation with the Jews formerly? (In order, effectually, to bring them off from all vain hopes, and improper expectations, of escaping the righteous judgments of God.) When, (in language, no doubt, applicable to the present time and dispensation) he thus addressed them, "Because ye have said, we have made a covenant with death, and with hell are we at agreement: when the overflowing scourge shall pass through, it shall not come unto us: for we have made lies our refuge, and under falsehood have we hid ourselves. Therefore thus saith the Lord God, Your covenant
B 2 with

* Lament. i. 1, &c.

with death shall be difannulled, and your agreement with hell shall not stand; when the overflowing scourge shall pass through, then shall ye be trodden down by it. From the time that it goeth forth shall it take you: for morning by morning shall it pass over, by day and by night; and it shall be a vexation only to understand the report. For the Lord shall rise up as in Mount Perazim, he shall be wroth as in the Valley of Gibeon, that he may do his work, his strange work; and bring to pass his act, his strange act.

“Now therefore, be ye not mockers, lest your bands be made strong: for I have heard from the Lord of hosts a consumption, even determined, upon the whole earth.”*

AND may we not say of this dispensation, as the prophet said in another case, “This also cometh forth from the Lord of hosts; which is wonderful in counsel, and excellent in working.”†

A PARTICULAR attention to the last mentioned words, in their distinct order, may serve to convince us, more fully, of the propriety of their quotation.

“THIS” This dispensation, that hath humbled the pride of man—this calamity—this fever—this pestilence—this plague—or, whatever name it may be called by:—that hath done, and is doing; that, which nothing but the immediate hand of
God

* Isaiah. xxviii.

† Isaiah. xxviii. 29.

God could do: in that, it hath shaken the kingdom of Satan, to its foundation, in the hearts of many of the inhabitants of this City.—that, in a few days, as it were at one stroke, hath brought home to the minds of all (not incurably hardened) the belief of a God—his superintending providence ---and, immediate agency in this dispensation--- That hath done at once---what days, weeks, months, years, yea many years, of instrumental labours, and lighter calamities, did not effect; evidently “also cometh forth from the Lord of hosts,” is an inscription, in such legible characters, as, that he who runs, may read it upon this judgment, so secret in approach---so sudden in attack---and, so fatal, so universal in operation: And, as proceeding from him, “which is wonderful in counsel,” is one link, in the great chain, of the wonderful counsels of God: And, although, at some dark times and seasons, the mystery of iniquity may seem very deep; and the kingdom and cause of Satan ready to prevail, and triumph in the world. Yet all, I believe, is ordered and directed in unerring wisdom; and however low and discouraging, to the rightly exercised christian, the cause of God and truth may appear to be in the earth: Yet, it never was, nor ever will be, totally extinct. But sometimes it appears, that the lowest depths, serve as foundations for the greatest heights of the testimonies of truth; and, for the promotion thereof in the earth. And

however various and many are the devices of men's hearts, yet the counsel of the Lord ! that shall stand. " And excellent in working." Indeed will God appear to be in this dispensation ; if some of the excellent productions thereof be duly considered, in respect of many of those individuals, who have improved it aright. Has it not, in many instances, opened a way for the display of the most excellent qualities of the man, and the christian ? Such as, faith, hope, charity---a weanedness from the world---dependance on God alone---repentance---reformation---clear prospects and foretastes of heaven---triumph over death : and, to sum up all in a word, love to God, and love to men.

THESE are the Lord's doings ! marvellous to us ! And will be so in the eyes of succeeding generations ! Amen.

SECONDLY, this Judgment may, in the second place, be viewed as mixed with mercy.

WELL may the surviving inhabitants of Philadelphia, in adoring language, of the deepest humility, and heartfelt gratitude, acknowledge it is of the Lord's mercies that we are not consumed : And could we be permitted to lift the veil, that separates time from eternity ; we should no doubt behold, that the boundless mercy of Christ, the Mediator, who, when on earth, was called the friend of publicans and sinners ; who came not to
call

call the righteous, but sinners to repentance ; who received the penitent thief from the cross into Paradise : has interceded with his father, in the midst of wrath, to remember mercy to many poor souls ; hid, in the vale of poverty and obscurity ; (perhaps great wickedness) from much of the notice and attention of the world---seized, as it were in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, with all the terrors---all the horrors of death ! Intimate friends, none ; or far away---the black sick carriage at the door---the dreary Hospital in view---and Potter's Field in expectation. On high, God angry for sin.---Below, Hell yawning to receive. In this situation, all that many a poor (though precious) soul could do, was the utterance of a groan or sigh :---Lord help me ! Or casting a desponding look toward Heaven, for mercy. In this misery extreme, I believe the Lord, whose tender mercies are over all the works of his hand, has frequently looked down from the height of his sanctuary, and out of Heaven has beheld the earth ; not to see the pomp and parade of princes ; nor the vanities and glories of this world ; but to hear the groanings of the (afflicted spiritual) prisoner ; and to loose such as seemed appointed both to temporal and eternal death : and in their last moments, has reached forth salvation :---and has raised them from the depths of woe on earth, to the heights of joy in Heaven.

NEITHER

NEITHER was the distress, nor mercy of the dispensation confined to the abject poor alone :--- but the horror and distress seemed as universal as sin---and the mercy of God as boundless as the objects that claimed his attention.

SOME, of all classes of citizens, have remained in the city : Numbers from motives of conscience, (may it not almost be said) pure as truth, and disinterested as the means of salvation. Some remained under a constraining necessity ; some to receive benefit themselves ; some to impart it to others, generally, all from good motives ; or, at least but very few (I believe) from those that were reprehensible.

NOR were those who fled, worthy of blame :--- many fled as influenced by a warning voice, to escape impending destruction ; some chose to, and did continue, almost within sight, and certainly within reach of feeling the distresses and afflictions of those who remained behind. Almost unbounded was the charity of many : and great the anxiety and concern of most, if not all, who were absent.

INDEED the mercy of God was evident in influencing some to go, others to stay : had all fled, who would have suffered ? Had all tarried, who would have escaped ? Therefore if any glory, for tarrying and being useful, let them glory in the Lord ; if any rejoice for fleeing and being safe, let them rejoice with fear and trembling : and
those

those who fled, and those who tarried, unite in charitable dispositions--brotherly love--thankful hearts--and reformed lives.

BUT to return more particularly to the mixture of mercy and judgment in this dispensation: Solomon said "money answereth all things." *And although a scripture phrase; may perhaps be taken in a more general sense, than the author designed: if this has ever been the case, many are now undeceived. This calamity was no respecter of persons: money had no charms for the pestilence Riches could offer no availing bribe to death: as said a celebrated poet:

"Their golden cordials could not ease
Their pained hearts, and aching heads,
Nor fright, nor bribe approaching death,
From glittering roofs and downy beds."†

And as on the one hand, riches did not raise the minds of men above sinning; so on the other, it did not excuse them from the bitter cup of sufferings. However captivating riches may appear in the view of most men, in times of worldly prosperity; yet it may be viewed as one of the mercies of this dispensation, that riches thereby, were set in a true and subordinate light: A drop of water to cool the parched tongue, and a fanning breeze of refreshing air, to allay the scorching heat of pestilential

* Eccles. x. 19.

† Dr. Watts.

lential flames; were in many cases, all the luxuries the most unbounded wealth could give: or the most voluptuous receive.

AN instantaneous view of approaching eternity; eclipsed in a moment, all the glory of this world, in the eyes of many, and cut asunder the connections of time and sense: and the soul by an act of faith, cast upon the unmerited mercy of God alone: immediately received a peace and a satisfactory assurance, and a stayedness of mind as far above what this world, in its most prosperous state can bestow: as the heavens are above the earth. And were enabled, by the boundless mercy of God, to leave a scene, which at best, as it related to temporal prosperity, was replete with disappointments to enter upon a state; glorious in prospect, perfect in enjoyment, and endless in duration!

GREAT numbers, (charity hopes the greatest number) of those, who have been removed by this dispensation, have given those survivors, who attended them, in their last moments, satisfactory hopes of their future well being.

FOR the justness of this observation; I appeal to surviving relatives---religious visitants---feeling physicians, and others:--who attended the chambers of the sick, and dying in 1793, 1797, and the present year, whether they have not been frequently witnesses for God; that his judgments have been mixed with unbounded mercy?

FREQUENTLY,

FREQUENTLY, very frequently ! After all that imagination can conceive and often more than any language can express, of horror and despair, has been seen and heard, in the unutterable distress and anguish usually attending this disorder; after the most heart piercing shrieks! terrifying convulsions! and, distorting agonies! have exhausted all their terrors, all their woes! Then, a gleam of extended mercy---a beam of divine light---a ray of immortal glory---has, with ineffable splendour, darted through all the horrors of the gloom---the distressed soul, enlivened by the joys of God's salvation; breathed high aspirations for its native land---assuming heavenly tranquillity, before unknown---triumphing over death and the grave---has quit the abode of clay---and, amid exulting angelic hosts of guardian spirits---winged its way towards the Paradise of God.

THUS the rich and the poor do meet together: and the Lord is not only the Maker of them all, but likewise the Redeemer and Saviour of many; it is to be hoped most of them.

THOSE who survive have occasion to speak of mercy as well as of Judgment: "Wherefore doth a living man complain, a man for the punishment of his sins"?*

Is it not a mercy from God, who influences the hearts of all men in virtuous actions, that such numbers

* Lament. iii. 39.

numbers of distinguished characters remained at their posts? That so many illustrious citizens were found, endued with wisdom; armed with fortitude; and blest with perseverance, to undertake, and carry on, and finally complete, the most hazardous and beneficial services, in the cause of suffering humanity? * The long list of Philadelphian worthies, will not only exist in the most lively feelings, and the warmest and most public and lasting expressions of the gratitude and respectful esteem of the present generation: but long, very long! after these public benefactors are laid low, will their grateful remembrance descend to succeeding generations; surrounded with illuminating tracts of resplendent glory, emanating from their deeds; even till time shall be no more.

In enumerating the mercies of God, may we not mention—fires seldom happened; few angry disputations took place; markets were well supplied; resignation and stayedness upon God were experienced: and his divine presence, at times, very sensibly felt, both in public and private devotions.

VOLUMES would be necessary to display that charity; bright resemblance of the Deity! which has been so abundantly bestowed; in alleviating the

* I lament not being able to do that particular justice to merit, so uncommon, which my feelings suggest; but (Providence permitting, and no abler pen preventing) I shall endeavour to remedy this defect in some future publication.

the distresses of this calamity. These offerings of divine preparing will no doubt, ascend as an acceptable sacrifice before the father of all mercies: and procure for the generous donors, the answer of "well done" and finally that glorious invitation "come ye blessed" in addition to the rewards of lasting thanks and gratitude; they will receive from their fellow men.

THE winds and the weather, (subordinate ministers of providence) have also been directed in much mercy.--But in attempting to speak of the mercies of God, I am launching into a boundless ocean! they are innumerable made known to us every morning, yea every moment of our lives! and more especially conspicuous at this time, when contrasted with the afflictive judgments of the present dispensation.

THIRDLY. You are now, as in the fear and dread of Almighty God, requested to view this awful dispensation; as a judgment designed for the punishment of sin: and the reformation and benefit of mankind.

OUR benign creator, who delighteth in mercy doth not afflict willingly, nor grieve the children of men. It is sin, and sin alone, that maketh a separation between any people; or any individual and God.

ADAM, by disobedience, lost Paradise.--The old world became depraved, and were drowned--Pharaoh, and his people for opposition to God,

and cruelty to the children of Israel : were punished many ways, and finally drowned in the Red sea.---Previous to the Egyptian's destruction, Sodom and Gomorrha, for pride, idleness, and fullness of bread : were overthrown by flaming sulphureous torrents from Heaven.---Moses for one rash expression was denied the happiness and glory of entering the promised land.---Sampson by not obeying God, lost his strength ; and fell a prey to his enemies.---Eli for not restraining his children from wicked practices, lost the priesthood, and met with a tragical death.---Saul by preferring sacrifice to obedience, lost the kingdom.---David, (though in many things a man after God's heart) for his heinous sins of adultery and murder, (committed very secretly) was punished before the sun, in the sight of all Israel.---The jews by means of various kinds of sin, (the relation of which composes no inconsiderable part of scripture) were finally brought from that height of power, which they enjoyed in the time of Solomon, to that degraded state, they at this day exhibit in the world.

It would far exceed my abilities, and the designed brevity of this publication, to display sin and all its consequences, from that of our first parents in paradise, down to the present dispensation. The sorrowful experience of all men, in all ages unite in this, that sin is the cause that renders the judgments of God necessary, absolutely necessary!

to prevent the total depravity and destruction of mankind.

FEELING at times an almost insupportable weight of my own sins and infirmities; I have almost sunk under the burden of delineating those of others. But a sense of duty renders objections and scruples (otherwise insurmountable) of no avail.

SINS of nations and communities, likewise those of individuals are various; so also are the consequent judgments or dispensations.

AMONG the long and black catalogue of sins and transgressions of mankind: The following, if conscience and self examination are duly attended to, will, I believe, appear to every considerate person, to have had no small influence in bringing the present calamitous dispensation, upon the city: and which the inhabitants are providentially, seriously and most earnestly, and affectionately, warned, and entreated, before it be too late! to repent of, reform, and entirely forsake, all

PRIDE,

IDLENESS,

INTEMPERANCE,

PROFANENESS,

COVETOUSNESS,

INJUSTICE,

SABBATH-BREAKING,

NEGLECT OF EDUCATION,

BAD-BOOKS,

MOCKERY OF RELIGION,
 UNTHANKFULNESS TO GOD, AND
 DISREGARD OF HIS JUDGMENTS, AND
 EVERY OTHER SIN;

As the only means of appeasing his anger and probably averting more signal tokens of his divine displeasure.

— — —
 P R I D E.
 — — —

SOLOMON observes, "only by pride cometh contention"* and in another place, "pride goeth before destruction, and an haughty spirit before a fall."† Oh, the sad the fatal effects of pride! How exceedingly apt it is to creep into, and entwine itself with, almost every circumstance and situation in life? Youth practises it; middle age delights in it; old age feels it; and external observations of religious duties, are not always exempt from it.

PRIDE and poverty are often connected; pride and mediocrity frequently associate; and pride and riches but too generally go hand in hand together. The profane are proud; and the professed followers of the meek and lowly Jesus, are very seldom sufficiently humble. Our relatives decorate us with pride at our birth: it follows us close, ah, very close, through life; forsakes us
 not

* Prov. xiii. 10.

† Prov. xvi. 18.

not always at death : but like an inseparable companion, approaches the grave—descends with the mortal part and moulders into dust. —Else, why the decorated coffins, and costly habiliments of the dead? Why, the immoderately long and pompous parades at funerals? Why, the lisping and tottering airs of the infant? Whence, the hypocritical sanctity in the countenance of the cold formal professor? Why, the unblushing front of the notoriously profane? Why, among those who would be thought rich, such an eager, such a premature introduction of eastern pomp and magnificence, in apartments and furniture, apparel, entertainments, and equipage? Why are conveniences sacrificed for elegancies? And else, why are necessities parted with for show?

Oh pride! thou enemy of all good! thou disturber of the harmony of heaven! that laid some of the highest angels low! that turned our first parents out of Paradise! that, in all ages of the world, has humbled and destroyed poor man!—How hast thou made thy way into this city; not only among the more unguarded and inexperienced, but into the very houses, hearts, and practices, of those societies; whose principles and professions, when sincere, would seem to place them at the greatest distance from thy insidious approaches! How inconsistent, how dangerous, is pride in any man; particularly so in a professed christian.

MUCH, that the controversy of God has been against, much, that has tended to the destruction of this city, has proceeded from pride: therefore let all, who wish for and value the real prosperity and welfare of this City in general, and their own in particular, be warned, exhorted and entreated to avoid pride, as they would one of the greatest evils.

IDLENESS.

IDLENESS was one of the sins that caused the destruction of Sodom, and has no doubt been very instrumental in procuring the present calamity.

IDLENESS is a wasting of time, doing nothing, or doing that which answers no good purpose.

IT is said in scripture, "All the Athenians and strangers which were there, spent their time in nothing else but either to tell or to hear some new thing."* Oh this idle curiosity! how it throngs all places of public resort, with those whose principal employment is to waste or kill time: these are active idlers---others, more passive, live like birds shut up in cages: to them unseen, the eyelids of the morning open in the East; to them are unknown and unenjoyed the delightful and healthy exercise of early morning walks,† when pure refreshing

* Acts, xvii. 21.

† I have frequently seen, with instruction and satisfaction, the Roman Catholics, Methodists, &c. in their early morning walks, to and from their public devotions, with countenances at once expressive of health and sincerity.

freshing balsamic air may be inhaled; uncontaminated by filth, dust, or smoke; when the ear may be soothed and charmed, and the mind very sensibly impressed and instructed, with the harmony and the joys of innocence, by the feathered songsters of the grove; who raise their artless and hallowed lays, to the great Parent of the universe, at the rising dawn of returning day; when the eye may be regaled with the extensive usefulness, beauty and glory of the rising sun; a sight almost worthy of adoration, from a heathen! and at least a tribute of gratitude and praise to God from a christian!

To some, whose bodies are enervated by sloth, and their minds debased by idleness, the sea and land pours in abundance on every side. The whole creation as it were travelth in pain, to minister unto their luxury and ease: every virtue, every duty, every obligation, devolving on them to perform, appear in their view to be comprized and fully summed up in one single point: possession of wealth!

IDLENESS frequently renders the soul dead to every virtue, but alive and fully active in every vice. Pests of society indeed! stagnating waters are not more pernicious in the natural world; than idle persons in the moral.

THE play-house, that synagogue of satan;* that Pandorian box; that public monument of disgrace
and

* Perhaps this expression may shock some persons, but the e-

and infamy, (so viewed and expressed by many religious and well disposed people of various denominations) serves as a place, a slaughter-house, for the idle and dissipated, of both sexes, of all societies to kill time. The play-house, that nursery of sin! that hot bed of vice! where those exotic phrases, customs, principles, habits and irregularities, are sheltered, sown, take root, flourish, are disseminated, transplanted, and spread through society, and receive a public countenance and protection; which otherwise could not in America, at present be obtained:—to the great promotion of dishonesty, neglect of business, extravagance, idleness, hypocrisy, and almost every impropriety and corruption of good principles in youth; proves at best, to those who are advanced in life, a corrupt source of bad examples, occasioning frequent breaches of good hours, and a neglect of necessary concerns and important duties, both of a public and private nature; and therefore may be justly considered, without any undue prejudice, as an effect of idleness and luxury; incompatible with christianity, and highly pernicious in any well ordered society.

THE

vident consequences of play-houses ought to shock them more:—Would any person of common sense, wishing to have well regulated children and domestics, choose, or even submit to live near a play-house, if possible to avoid it? Would the pride or morality of many citizens, who countenance the theatres, be flattered by their sons or daughters appearing on the stage? Or would they esteem themselves or families honored or benefited by an intimate acquaintance with the actors?

THE present dispensation serves to shew in the clearest point of view, the baleful effects of idleness in many of its consequences; and that it has been a mean of drawing down the divine displeasure upon this City.

MAY all be persuaded to a sense and practice of duty! life is short—its concerns weighty—its duties many and various. The idle person is a blank or something worse in creation. May the fire of this dispensation purify us from idleness, that rust and canker of soul and body.

INTEMPERANCE.

INTEMPERANCE, comprehending (to speak in plain terms) gluttony and drunkenness and excess of all kinds in general, does at all times, and in all places tend very evidently to the destruction of man, soul and body!

THE scripture saith, “Woe to the drunkards of Ephraim!”* and may it not be added? “Woe to the drunkards of Philadelphia.” Solomon saith, “The drunkard and the glutton shall come to poverty.”† And in another place, “Who hath woe? Who hath sorrow? Who hath contentions? Who hath babbling? Who hath wounds without cause? Who hath redness of eyes? They that tarry long at the wine, they that go to seek mixed wine.”‡ The effects or consequences
of

* Isaiah. xxviii. 1.

† Prov. xxiii. 21.

‡ Prov. xxiii. 29, 30.

of many sins are aimed at others in the first instance, and only ultimately or collaterally fall upon the perpetrators: but the intemperate person, turns a whole train of evils directly upon himself, that only affect others in an indirect or accidental way and manner. Therefore the intemperate person may be truly said to be his own worst enemy; destroying with his own hands the greatest blessing he can possibly enjoy, of a temporal nature, health; and exposes the soul, that immortal part, in the most direct manner to everlasting destruction. Are not the gales of life sufficiently brisk? Are the gentle breezes of health too long uninterrupted by the storms and hurricanes of sickness and trouble? Is the passage to eternity likely to prove too short? that such multitudes eagerly plunge into that all destructive and overwhelming vortex, intemperance.

THIS dispensation, the Yellow Fever, has called the drunkard and the glutton to a very severe account; many, of this description, may be truly compared to vessels of wrath fitted for destruction. And what renders it the more to be lamented, is, that it is done by themselves not ignorantly (if that were the case, they would be more pitiable objects) but knowingly, willingly, and wittingly.

LET the drunkard and the glutton, who have survived: and the intemperate of every description; be warned, solemnly warned, ! speedily, ere it

It be too late! to view this dispensation of Almighty God, in a true and clear light; and themselves, as abusers of the bounties of God---their own destroyers --disturbers of society---setters of evil examples :---and involved, deeply involved, in drawing down the vengeance of heaven.

HEAR me, I beseech you, Oh ye sons of Intemperance! In future let your moderation, in eating and drinking, be known to all men* and be persuaded to reform, and entirely renounce all intemperance.

WHEN you take the pernicious intoxicating draught in your hands, highly charged with distilled spirits; those "liquid fires"---Think, Oh think! before you swallow the slow but fatal poison! That you are about to drink the "life blood" of the wretched African. Hark! what mingled sounds assail the ear! Are they not the resounding echoes of the lash? And the sighs and groans of despair? Behold the agonizing tear! View well the drops of blood! Count the long train of *Wretched Victims* West

* Draymen, carters, &c. respectable as many of them are, for attention to their business, at once useful and absolutely necessary yet when any of them give way to immoderate drinking; their Horses but too often suffer the most cruel and inhuman abuses:--Being frequently overloaded and beaten in a manner shocking to humanity, and disgraceful to any civilized people.

An animal, so noble in figure and courage, so useful and serviceable to man; cannot be wantonly abused, without great guilt being incurred in the sight of that God, who is the maker of the Horse, as well as of his rider, leader, and driver. Does not the Horse in many ways assist government; and therefore claim a protection from abuse by its laws?

West Indian Slavery's woe! Mixed up in the inebriating bowl for your destruction: Pause! receive advice!—and wisely shun the glass!

IN quitting all Intemperance of every kind we shall very effectually attend to one of the first and greatest of all moral obligations, self preservation; and essentially promote domestic happiness, which once destroyed, or impaired, seldom admits a substitute.

I SHALL conclude this part of my address, with that very important recommendation and advice of the apostle, Paul, “Whether, therefore ye eat, or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God.*

PROFANENESS.

PROFANENESS, another sin, in the catalogue of crimes, under consideration, is in many instances connected with Intemperance. The tongue, that Instrument of Profaneness, according to the scripture account, and daily observation: “Is a little member and boasteth great things. Behold how great a matter a little fire kindleth! And the tongue is a fire, a world of iniquity: so is the tongue among our members, that it defileth the whole body, and setteth on fire the course of nature; and it is set on fire of Hell.”†

* 1 Cor. x. 31.

† James, iii. 5, 6.

OH! how many of such wicked engines of destruction hath been in this city; set on fire, at least by spiritous liquors. How affecting to any religious, or well disposed person? Is the language, shall I say the language of Hell: That, but too frequently, too generally prevails; not only in the streets, but likewise in many of the houses in Philadelphia. Profaneness, at which, foreigners * stand astonished, and the sons of the boisterous ocean, confess themselves outdone!

WHERE now (in this calamitous season) is the profane swearer? struck dumb! or if an oath or imprecation escape from his unruly tongue; he is stared at, even by his associates; as a monster of profaneness!

MAY the dread of this sin of profaneness forever last; and the command of our Saviour, "Swear not at all;"† be in future strictly obeyed.

COVETOUSNESS.

COVETOUSNESS termed by the Apostle Paul "Idolatry"‡ and the inordinate love of money, D

* An intelligent sea Captain; a native of Scotland, and head of a family in this city informed me, that for variety of singular profaneness of expression; the youth, as well as those of riper years in this place, exceed all he ever saw or heard of in any part of the world.

† Matth. v. 28.

‡ Colos. iii. 5.

which he also styles “the root of all evil;”* has had no inconsiderable share in contributing to our very distressed situation.

COVETOUSNESS has intruded upon, and marred, and much injured the original plan of the first founder of this City, the truly honourable WILLIAM PENN.

ACCORDING to his design, (if I am rightly informed) no buildings were to be erected between Front street and the River Delaware. But covetousness, regardless of the beauty---the convenience---the natural order---and health of the city; has crowded buildings in a manner, that is inconvenient for business, and destructive to the inhabitants.---And viewing this matter in a natural light only, and extending our views no farther than the surface of things.---It would, I believe be a great benefit to this city, if every building of the above description were entirely removed: and the vacancy supplied by one or two ranges of low and wide stores intersected with rows of trees.---And paved or graveled walks. By such or similar arrangements; The intense heat of a Summer’s Meridian sun: its reflected sultry rays at particular hours from the surface of the river: and corrupted and stagnated air from confined and crowded houses, generally destitute of yards; together with other inconveniences and disadvantages too many and too obvious to be particularly enumerated:

* 1 Tim. vi. 10.

enumerated: would generally be removed, or greatly alleviated and avoided.

COVETOUSNESS, thus considered, has most essentially combined, with other causes, to mar the beauty---injure the prosperity---and endanger the existence of the city.

AND here it may be observed, that the pestilence whether originating in natural, or moral causes, or both combined; has in its three fatal visitations: first made its appearance eastward of Front-street.

THESE effects of covetousness are difficult to obviate, perhaps impossible entirely to remove: I shall therefore endeavour to turn your attention to the effects of covetousness in points, if not less fatal, yet more remediable.

COVETOUSNESS, when it once gains an ascendancy in the mind, is one of the most dangerous vices: in proof of this, much might be produced from scripture and history, but I shall principally confine my observations to America in general, and Philadelphia in particular.

What but covetousness caused such unheard of cruelties to be committed upon the ancient inhabitants of South America? and let me ask what but covetousness caused so many of the original inhabitants of North America, at once, to lose their lands without receiving compensation, and their lives without giving provocation? is it not an indisputable fact, that some of the states ob-

tained their lands by robbery and murder ? and to the disgrace of a free and enlightened nation ; do not some of them continue to have their plantations cultivated by slavery and oppression ?

But amidst all the sorrows of my heart, it affords me real satisfaction to observe that this state was free from this odious trait of covetousness, in its first settlement ; and the numerous and beneficial charitable institutions, which in this city, far exceed those of any other on the continent, stamp the liberality of the citizens, in the most conspicuous and durable characters. Under this view, may we not, in the language of scripture, say : if “the time is come that judgment must begin at the house of God ; and if it first begin at us, what shall the end be of them that obey not the the gospel of God ?”

BUT if the monster covetousness stalks not in public, it lurks unseen in private : of too many individuals it may be said ;

“ Of all their views, the first and chief request,
“ Of each, is to be richer than the rest.”

WHICH extreme ardour, in the acquisition of riches, seems at variance with the œconomy of providence. I appeal to every serious and attentive observer of providential dispensations, in the natural and moral world ;--if covetousness in a father, does not frequently occasion prodigality in the son ?

COVETOUSNESS

* 1 Peter, iv. 17.

COVETOUSNESS often defeats its own purposes--grasping at all---it, eventually holds none. Has not covetousness in this city of late, too much taken the place of Industry in business?---Has not the use of banks been abused---artificial capitals (of short duration) created, imprudent in commencement--perplexing in advancement---and ruinous in the end?

COVETOUSNESS, by this dispensation, is punished in all its branches. The apprentice lad, too closely confined, now enjoys a long vacation.---The avaricious landlord, perceives his rents declining in magnitude and number.---With most, the means of acquisition are few; Those of disbursement many.

Happy are those, who duly consider,

“ Man wants but little here below,
“ Nor wants that little long.”

AND the last, though not the least command saith,
“ Thou shalt not covet.”

INJUSTICE.

INJUSTICE so connected and closely allied with covetousness, as, in many instances scarcely to be distinguished from it; Is not entirely unknown nor unpracticed here. Viewing things upon a large scale; War, that source of many evils, lays an ample foundation for Injustice: The last war did not pass

wholly unimproved---embezzlement---speculation and speculation---as intimately connected with a state of war; as the touch of a match, is with the explosion of a cannon; in some degree prevailed: The hardy soldier, who exposed his breast, as his country's barrier; earned, for greedy speculators to receive.

Is this city free from injustice of this sort? overgrown nominal estates---foundations for princely palaces---and a variety of vast speculative schemes and arrangements, say no! And suffer me to ask, whether some are not more scrupulous against personally bearing arms, in war; than against speculation in, and profit thereby?

INJUSTICE, and speculation, in large and national concerns; has a direct tendency, by example and otherwise to infect a whole community.---Punctuality the life of business and basis of confidence, falls a sacrifice. Iniquitous adulterations---false balances---and diverse weights, are branches of injustice too often practised: But a destructive principle is connected with all unjust practices, containing a fire, that will sooner or later certainly devour.

SABBATH-BREAKING.

THE apostle Paul speaking of the Sabbath, saith
 " he that regardeth the day, regardeth it unto the
 Lord;

Lord ;"* passing over without notice, the pride of fashion, and parade of dress, particularly discernible on the Sabbath : I shall endeavour to explain its nature and use : and the pernicious effects resulting from an abuse thereof.

THE Sabbath is an ancient institution primeval with creation---appointed to man, for rest from labour, in obedience to the ordinance and example of God.

IF one day in seven, was necessary, was useful, for man to observe, as a day of rest, while innocent and uncorrupted: How much more so now, in his present state and situation? Surrounded on every side with perplexing cares; and beset with bodily and mental imperfections.

THERE are but few, if any, of the different religious societies in this City, whose forefathers or themselves have not suffered in some age or nation of the world, in a greater or lesser degree; disadvantages, fines, punishments of some kind, persecutions, imprisonments, or death, from the iron hand of arbitrary power; for the conscientious performance of religious worship, on this blessed day. But praised be God! a nation is born! a Government arisen! a Constitution established! of which we are a part, and under which we live; that gives to, and protects all, in a full and free liberty of conscience, in matters of religion and worship! How is this important,
this

* Rom. xiv. 6.

this precious, this inestimable privilege improved? Is it improved in a manner that tends to promote God's glory and our benefit?

THE affairs of this world, necessarily, unavoidably, engage much of men's attention, particularly in commercial cities; and without such an institution as the sabbath, the mind would be in danger of being entirely engrossed and overwhelmed in temporal pursuits; and some of the most important duties of christianity and morality neglected and entirely forgotten: Death unregarded, and a future state unthought of, and unprepared for.

It will no doubt be readily assented to, by all considerate persons, that the sabbath has in this place heretofore been shamefully neglected and disregarded. The apostle Paul, exhorted the people in his day, to be careful in not forsaking the assembling together, as the manner of some was.

HERE permit me to ask, are there not many heads of families, and others, whose conduct should be exemplary, that seldom, if ever, attend any place of public worship? Surely in this city, where twelve or more of different religious denominations meet separately, no person can plead excuse, when in health, for a general course of non-attendance, at some one of these places.

CAN those be said to spend the sabbath with propriety or real use, who keep it as a day of feasting, diversion, or amusement, either in town or country?

COMMON

COMMON observation will justify me in saying, that the sabbath, nominally a holy, is with many by far the most unholy and ill spent day in the week. Oh, what mockery! what perversion of order! what monstrous ingratitude and impropriety is exhibited on this day, (particularly set apart for divine worship.) The day is profaned by many, of whom better things might reasonably be expected; things that tend to edification, not destruction.

ON this day, instead of humility, behold pride! instead of temperance, excess! instead of self examination, and deep searchings of heart, behold vain and unprofitable conversation, and light airy behaviour!* instead of a stillness and quietness through the city: behold the parade, and hear the rattling of the carriages, the sound of the whip, and the prancing of the horses! to the great grief and disquiet of those, who wish to sanctify the sabbath themselves, and to see and hear the like of others. My brethren, these things ought not to be.

MAY that supreme being, who first instituted the sabbath, and since has commanded us expressly to

* I think it an incumbent duty, here to mention the satisfaction I have received in being an eye and ear witness at different times, and in various parts of this city, of the exemplary conduct of numbers of the Africans, on the sabbath. As I have passed many of their houses, I have observed them teaching their children—reading the scriptures—and discoursing upon religious subjects; to the great reproach of the conduct of many who claim a superior rank in the scale of being.

to keep it holy, have his anger, which has been kindled against the sabbath-breakers, appeased, by a seasonable and lasting reformation.

My heart within me, is, in measure warmed with the love of God, which I feel at this time, flowing through my soul, towards all the inhabitants of this city, of whatever denomination; and the travail and exercise of my spirit for them; is, that they may all be brought out of darkness into light; and from the service of sin and satan unto the true worship of the living God: and that we may keep our sabbaths here below, in such a manner, that we may be permitted to see good days, according to the days wherein we have seen evil; and, that finally, we may be admitted to keep that sabbath of rest with the Almighty, which the spirits of the just enjoy with him, in his kingdom for ever.

I WISH to enforce this subject upon your minds with every degree of weight, that its nature and importance requires: Being convinced in my own mind, that if, in future, sabbaths are remembered and sanctified, throughout the city, it will have a powerful tendency to correct vice—establish virtue—and thereby procure the divine favour: that so, an all powerful and kind providential care, may watch over this city, and all its widely extended concerns—for preservation, not destruction!

BUT

BUT on the other hand, if no reformation takes place, my foreboding apprehensions suggest, that what we have seen, felt and suffered, are only the beginning of sorrows.

NEGLECT OF EDUCATION.

A DEEP concern for the temporal and spiritual welfare, of the young and rising generation, has long dwelt with great weight upon my mind; and I have anxiously desired that they might be a generation to serve the Lord. A generation worthy to come forward in a country possessed of so many natural and acquired advantages!

BUT alas! until they see less of bad examples—are more restricted from reading pernicious books—kept at a greater distance from improper associates—and are brought to submit to a stricter discipline. What well grounded hopes can reasonably be entertained for their welfare?

THE neglect of parents and others, in these important respects, have, I believe, essentially contributed to the present calamity; and a sense of these fatal neglects, has by this dispensation, been brought home to the feelings and conscience of many an unhappy parent, when on a dying bed, taking a long, an heart rending farewell of their weeping offspring; or viewing a much beloved child, under all the inexpressible horrors, of this most dreadful of all disorders! encircled in
the

the icy arms, and cold embraces of approaching death!

ON the reverse, where education has been strictly attended to, and the parent's duty faithfully discharged, there has been an answer of peace in these trying moments, which not all the wealth of the Indies could give, nor all the horrors of death take away.

WHEREFORE, let all such parents as are spared to their children: and have children continued unto them; be tenderly entreated to be more attentive to this important point, education. Our Saviour when personally on earth; did not think children unworthy of his attention, but took them in his arms and blessed them, saying, "of such is the kingdom of God."* And Solomon, a Jewish King, noted for wisdom, said, "train up a child in the way he should go; and when he is old he will not depart from it."†

BAD BOOKS.

IT is much to be lamented, that so noble, so ingenious, and so universally useful an art as printing, should ever be so debased, as, in any instance, to become an engine destructive of mankind, and a powerful auxiliary to the cause of vice. But the experience of past and present times, in too many

* Mark, x. 14.

† Prov. xxii. 6.

ny instances, prove the press may be prostituted to very unworthy purposes, particularly printing bad books.

THE avenues of education and instruction, are often obstructed and corrupted by reason of bad books, by their means the attention of youth is forcibly attracted, and intensely fixed upon frivolous, and often upon very improper and pernicious objects and narrations. Whereby the worst of impressions and principles are frequently rivetted in their young and tender minds: And their lively imaginations, fired with premature ideas, and false notions of men and things: Therefore may it be truly said.---“Bad Books are a public fountain of vice.”

SCRIPTURE informs us, the Apostle Paul wrought so great a conviction, at a certain time, on the minds of the Ephesians; That many of them, “which used curious arts brought their books together, and burned them before all men: and they counted the price of them and found it fifty thousand pieces of silver.”*

If all the vain, wicked and unprofitable books in this city, were collected into one place, the bulk would doubtless be astonishingly great, could all their pernicious contents be seen at once, no mind not callous to the feelings of virtue; but would be filled with horror:---But ah! could all their fatal effects; as disobedience to parents---

E... debaucheries

* Acts, xix. 19.

debaucheries---prostitutions---broken promises---perjuries---adulteries---suicides and other crimes too horrid to name, and all the souls eventually lost, caused by learning in, and inculcated from this abominable library of hell, be fully known :--- not an arm, in the city, would remain a moment unstretched to light the funeral pile of departing vice: And the curling clouds of the rising columns of smoke would ascend towards heaven, as an acceptable sin offering from the inhabitants of Philadelphia.

If prudent parents are cautious (as they certainly ought to be) in respect of what, company they admit in their families, as intimate acquaintances:---how much more caution is necessary with regard to books?

In conversation many circumstances serve to repress and abash vicious dispositions and inclinations. In reading none. The most pernicious books are generally read with the greatest secrecy: not a blush raised at any impropriety of expression: nor perhaps a thought excited, or alarmed with a sense of danger; while the most intimate and destructive connections are forming by means of books: between wicked and designing authors; and innocent and unsuspecting youth.

Is it not an incumbent duty upon every person; capable of serious reflection, to inspect their own books; and those of their dependants: and to burn and entirely destroy all such as tend to corrupt

rupt good morals: and to lead the mind astray from the paths of innocence, rectitude, and virtue: and to suffer, upon no pretence whatever, any book to remain, or, ever after to be introduced, that may be found inconsistent with the purest morals, and the strictest reformation; that now seems so evidently necessary to take place?

REMEMBER I beseech you, how, that in Joshua's time, the secreting a wedge of gold, some silver, and a Babylonish garment; brought trouble upon the children of Israel; and proved the entire destruction of one of its families.

OH! that one and all of us, may be induced from the best of motives, to unite in so laudable an undertaking, as that of effectually clearing this city of bad books; if rightly undertaken, God will no doubt, in mercy to the rising generation, crown every honest effort with desired success.

MOCKERY OF RELIGION.

OR open declaration of war with heaven, has been attempted, and in some measure carried on, in every age of the world: but, it never finally prospered, nor ever will eventually prevail.

PERHAPS, at no time, were the essential principles of natural and revealed religion, more generally attacked throughout the world; than at the present day. Some, by attempting to do away real or supposed errors, confound, right and

wrong---truth and falsehood in one blended and undistinguished overthrow: instead of mending, destroy---instead of correcting, obliterate: And with the tares pluck up the wheat. Others without ceremony, openly and directly attack and deny all revealed religion.---The scriptures, they pretend, are a mere farce, a human invention, much of them political fables, calculated to keep the ignorant and vulgar in awe; assuming to themselves the privilege of being numbered with the enlightened few, who have discovered the cheat. With some, (as they pretend) God is nothing but a name; Christ a mere man; Heaven, only an imaginary good; and Hell, a fictitious evil.

THESE opinions, whatever plausible pretexts some of them may assume, are, as they relate to man in this world, directly pointed against all government, all social compact, all that tends to render life desirable, or even supportable. As to a future state, these all destructive principles render it a chaos, o'er which broods more than Egyptian darkness: Annihilation! mental destruction! to cease to be! are prospects more terrific, to the immortal mind forever active, and the rolling eye enjoying the golden day, than all the most gloomy imagination can paint, or the warmest enthusiasm believe of shades below.

AGAINST such principles, hostile to human happiness in every view, every wise, every good man, feels at once opposed. The politician views them

as a devouring hydra, before which, no government can stand; and the moralist and the christian view them as productive of every present and future woe.

PRINCIPLES like these, wicked fools alone advance, advocate, or pretend to believe!

BUT however great my partiality and charity for this city may be, I am persuaded they would be extended too far, if I should suppose it entirely free from such principles, however inconsistent with wisdom, goodness, or common honesty.

To such persons, few, I hope, in number, as dangerous in sentiment, what can be addressed with any prospect of success? God's own power, immediately, or man's good examples, instrumentally, seem the only remedies, in cases so desperate.

GOD's power so signally displayed, at this time, both in mercy and judgment, in preserving and destroying—in obscuring the world in all its glory—in withdrawing its pleasures and advantages, in so great a degree, from its principal votaries and dependants, has occasioned the atheist, the deist, and the unbelievers of all descriptions, to experience sad times! gloomy days! and great remorse! Conscience in many has been aroused! The wrath of Almighty God, and the terrors of his judgments, have brought conviction home to the minds of many; under which they have been

made to cry out, Lord, save me, or I die! A redeemer, or I perish!

THE mind of man, ever active in the pursuit of happiness, when disappointed in one object, naturally turns to another; as saith an eminent poet:

“Man has a soul of vast desires;
He burns within with restless fires,
Toss’d to and fro, his passions fly,
From vanity to vanity.”

AND after a long and unsuccessful pursuit, not satisfied with all this world can bestow, in this dark and bewildered situation, the bright rays of good examples, at times strike through the surrounding gloom, the mind is attracted to the glory of the light, and the brightness of its rising: On nearer survey, he is astonished to find, that while he has been unhappy in prosperity and adversity, the christian enjoys happiness in both: that what he has been seeking from without, the christian finds within; that, while from the most unbounded success in war, (which engrosses so much of our attention) lasting, individual, or national happiness can never arise: that, while wealth, however immense, cannot give peace; nor universal fame and applause, bestow real content. The good man has a world within, where God rules (the devil seldom enters); where politics, wealth and fame, are merely accidental matters, not having

having the highest pre-eminence; happiness or misery, depend on them in a subordinate manner only.

FROM a feeling of the judgments of God—from an experience of the vanity of the world, its insufficiency to bestow lasting happiness—from beholding the dignity of virtue, and seeing the good man happy in every situation—many are at times brought into a state of inward attention and consideration, which, if abode in, with patience and perseverance, would be the means, by the blessing of God, of bringing those, who are thus exercised, out of darkness into light; out of anxiety and discontent, into peace, and a well grounded hope of future happiness.

If unbelievers can receive instruction from the examples of good men, in their lives, they may not be altogether unbenefited by attending to their deaths.

IT is the end that crowns all; and where a man is seen calmly quitting every earthly connection—passing the verge of time—entering on the borders of eternity—satisfied with life—unmoved at death! it appears to all a consummation devoutly to be wished; and many are ready to adopt the language of Balaam, “Let me die the death of the righteous, and let my last end be like his!”*

SOME infidels, who do not openly deny all revealed religion, yet by their conduct, seem to entertain

* Numb. xxiii. 10.

entertain a thorough contempt and disregard of its professors. This, no doubt, is highly displeasing in the sight of God.

WE frequently see and hear that the rulers of the earth, when their ambassadors, their envoys extraordinary, their subjects or citizens, are treated with abuse, contempt, or neglect, in a foreign land, denounce the vengeance of the state, unless reparation for the offence is made. An insult to an individual is often viewed as offered immediately to the majesty of the nation: War sometimes ensues, and thousands, comprehending the innocent and guilty, are often involved in one undistinguished ruin.

If earthly potentates are so jealous of matters concerning honour and respect, whether relating immediately to themselves, or those under their direction and government, can we suppose the supreme ruler of the universe, possessing all knowledge and power, to be an idle spectator, and wholly indifferent about the manner in which his messengers are received---his servants treated---and his communications attended to and obeyed?

MOST individuals and most communities have a day; wherein happiness, in its most extensive sense, may be obtained. Adam had a day---but not being sufficiently attentive he suffered loss.---The old world, had their day, but they neglected it:---Among them, was Noah, a preacher of righteousness, but he was disregarded; they were too
much

much immersed in temporal concerns; the earth was filled with violence: all flesh had corrupted his way---and destruction ensued. And although the Almighty covenanted with Noah and his posterity, that so universal a destruction among mankind, by reason of a flood should not again take place: yet we have seen, and this day feel, that the Lord's arm is not shortened, either to save or destroy.

SODOM and Gomorrha had a day, but alas! it was neglected; till destruction came: though they had a Lot in the city to warn and reprove; and an Abraham in the country to intercede with Heaven. Oh how many reproving Lots, and interceding Abrahams, have, day and night, in season and out of season, been employed for the salvation of this city. Some of whom have been mocked and despised---pointed and jeered at, when walking the streets---and, all in effect have been but too much disregarded until calamity approached.

AHAB had a day, and although a very wicked King, surrounded by an idolatrous people---and his public and private concerns troubled with a cruel, meddling, unprincipled woman: which stirred him up to do, what perhaps otherwise would not have been done: Yet when the Lord reproved him by the mouth of his prophet, he did not mock at religion, nor despise his messenger; (though he counted him for an enemy) but
he

he humbled himself before God, and his doom was suspended.

THE inhabitants of Ninevah had a day of grace assigned unto them : and by attending thereto in earnest---by an universal humiliation---fervent prayer to Almighty God---and a thorough repentance and reformation---the anger of the most high was appeased---and his righteous judgments not inflicted.

THE Jews had a day, a long day of grace, but they never fully improved it. They were divided into different sects; some Pharisees; some Sadducees; others perhaps, of no particular denomination, but mockers at any appearance of religion. Most were too much outward in their performances, and few sincere at heart in the sight of God: They, as a city, as a nation, withstood the law and the prophets: the Son and sent of God, came personally unto them; but they received him not: they mocked and persecuted both him and the religion he came to establish; which brought upon them and their city, a destruction attended with circumstances unparralleled in history, ancient or modern, sacred or profane.

A PROSPECT of which, brought from the compassionate and ever blessed Son of God and saviour of the world, that pathetic exclamation and dreadful denunciation, " Oh, Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto thee, how often would I have

have gathered thy children together, as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not! Behold, your house is left unto you desolate. For I say unto you, ye shall not see me henceforth, till ye shall say, Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord.”*

THESE things, my afflicted brethren of Philadelphia, were written for warnings and examples to us, and now, in my measure of that love, that wisheth well to all men, are endeavoured to be revived in your remembrance.

MAY God of his infinite mercy, through Jesus Christ our Lord and Saviour, grant that these things may be received in the love of the truth: That all, who have heretofore been mockers of religion, may be convinced of their folly and danger, and turn from their evil ways; lest they should experience from God, what is spoken of by the wise man Solomon, “Because I have called and ye have refused; I have stretched out my hand, and no man regardeth; but ye have set at nought all my counsel, and would none of my reproof; I also will laugh at your calamity; I will mock when your fear cometh. When your fear cometh as desolation, and your destruction cometh as a whirlwind; when distress and anguish cometh upon you; then shall they call upon me, but I will not answer; they shall seek me early, but they shall not find me: For that they hated knowledge

* Matth. xxiii. 37, 38, 39.

ledge, and did not choose the fear of the Lord: They would none of my counsel; they despised all my reproof: Therefore shall they eat of the fruit of their own way, and be filled with their own devices, For the turning away of the simple shall slay them, and the prosperity of fools shall destroy them.*

UNTHANKFULNESS TO GOD,
AND
DISREGARD OF HIS JUDGMENTS!

THE whole world exhibits one general and universal proof of mankind being in too many instances, deficient in gratitude for mercies; and but too frequently inattentive to corrections inflicted by divine providence for sin.

THE actions and fate of men and nations, faithfully recorded and handed down to those of the present day, afford a melancholy proof of this.

THE greater the favours, and the later the age in which bestowed, if unthankfully received and not suitably improved, proportionably increase guilt, and consequently the weight of the judgments that may be justly expected.

ALL the labours, all the improvements in the useful arts and sciences, by former generations, are enjoyed by us of the present day. Not two centuries have passed away since the first settlements

* Prov. i. 24—32.

ments were made in this country, by people called civilized. Its advances (through dangers great and pressing) to Empire and Independence were attended with a rapidity and success, far exceeding the most sanguine expectations and hopes of its principal founders.

THIS city, which has shared so largely in national advancement and prosperity---*this* city, so eminently favoured with liberty, health, peace and plenty---*this* city where toleration ever prevailed and extensive liberty is now enjoyed---*this* city whose burial grounds were often so strictly guarded by the angel of health, that scarcely a solitary corpse for months could gain admittance, and then, under such circumstances of pomp and parade; as seemed rather calculated for an ostentatious display of wealth and family distinction; than, a descent to—the silent mansions of the dead---*this* city, whose police seemed to contain the very essence of peace; whose gaol, instead of exhibiting a scene of human misery, idleness, corruption, and depravity in almost every shape, seemed better calculated for, and more expressive of, an university, where legislators from different States, and foreigners of eminence and distinction might assemble, to learn the benefits of order----The advantages of œconomy, industry, and good regulations: and the practicalness and utility of combining the principles of the christian religion, with the formation and execution of human laws.--

this city whose port was crowded with vessels from every clime.---*this city* whose markets equalled or exceeded all in America, perhaps in the world; for goodness, variety, and plenty: uniting the luxuries of the east, with the conveniences and necessities of the west.---*this city*, under all these circumstances; (and many others that might be enumerated) that individually enjoyed, would call forth the thanks of any grateful people: and, when all united, claim, one general and lasting tribute of thankfulness and praise; *has been unthankful and ungrateful to God: calamities of former times have not been suitably noticed, nor judgments of later date duly regarded.*

THUS, it appears, that in *this city*, pride has abounded numbers have lived in idleness, many have been intemperate---others profane---some are covetous---some unjust---the sabbath is broken---education neglected---bad books read---religion mocked at.---God's mercies have not excited sufficient thankfulness---nor his judgments been duly regarded!

UNDER an awful impression from this view! the prophet's language to the revolting Jews, may be applied to Philadelphia, "Ah, sinful nation, (city,) a people laden with iniquity, a seed of evil-doers, children that are corrupters! they have forsaken the Lord, they have provoked the Holy One of Israel unto anger; they are gone away backward."*

IMPRESSED

* Isaiah, i. 4.

IMPRESSED, with these solemn and melancholy truths, may a serious and careful examination take place in every mind : and let all, who wish well to themselves, and to the future welfare and prosperity of this city, endeavour to amend whatever may have been amiss.---The Almighty doth not afflict willingly nor grieve the children of men. Punishments are preceded by warnings and exhortations. Sin, when unrestrained by punishment, is of such a nature ; as, of itself to destroy mankind. Punishment therefore, when mixed with mercy ; may be viewed as tending to man's benefit, when suitably improved : otherwise no flesh could stand in judgment.

A GREAT work of reformation, I hope, and believe is, bringing about by the various permissions and dispensations of divine providence at the present day.

JUDGMENTS are sometimes varied according to the sins and circumstances of those upon whom they are inflicted. People delighting in war and bloodshed, spreading ruin and devastation among their neighbours, sometimes experience those calamities, designed for others, turned upon themselves ; or something of the same convulsive, and sudden destructive nature : as Fire, Hurricanes, Deluges, Earthquakes and the like.

BUT the inhabitants of this city, are many of them peaceable men ; professing to stand aloof from war, and being concerned in the destruction

of their fellow men :---pacific principles, by reason of their advocates intermixing with their fellow citizens, upon many local interesting occasions; and thereby in conjunction with the great diffusion of knowledge, and the improved civilization of the present day have insensibly infused general principles of peace, with some exceptions, into the mass of society. The citizens, therefore, speaking in general terms; may be called pacific in many of their principles, and most of their practices; their sins may be considered, as committed more directly against God, and their own souls and bodies; than against the lives and properties of their neighbours.

THE punishment therefore of these transgressions seem to proceed directly from God, and to be confined in a manner to the city: with a happy tendency when improved aright, to enforce the observance of those duties, which have been neglected, and the practice of those virtues, that stand opposed to the sins and vices, which have been most prevalent.

THUS humility, as opposed to pride: industry, instead of idleness, the illustrious train attendant on temperance, instead of the frightful group surrounding excess---instead of profaneness, sobriety---liberality instead of covetousness---instead of injustice, honesty---sabbaths sanctified, instead of broken—Children taught by virtuous examples, and proper discipline, instead of a vitiated and neglected

neglected education---instead of reading bad books, a more frequent use of the scriptures, and a perusal of edifying subjects---instead of mocking and ridiculing religion and its author, a devotion to them above all things---and instead of unthankfulness to God, and disregard of his judgments, lives entirely devoted to his service and praise : and a religious dread of again incurring his righteous indignation are virtues, reformations, and benefits, pressed, enjoined, and conferred, by this dispensation, upon us, and by us, as examples, to and upon mankind ; in a language, though dumb, eloquent---mute yet expressive--silent but positive--far beyond all powers of the elocution of angels or men ; being the immediate voice of God himself !

WHICH voice that we may all hear, and so obey ; as to live in truth and peace before him---may God of his infinite mercy grant, through Jesus Christ our Lord ! AMEN.

FOURTHLY. It may be observed in the fourth and last place, that this dispensation is a judgment, that unless suitably attended to probably will be followed by more vindictive tokens of divine displeasure.

THE end, or design of punishment, is usually, of a two-fold nature---to destroy vice, and introduce virtue.

THE visitation of divine judgment upon this city, which is scarcely removed, whether we

view it in its nature or effect; in its cause or immediate consequence, our enquiries will result in this:—*That God has been angry with the inhabitants of Philadelphia, for their sins; and by this third visitation of the plague, has, as it were by his immediate voice from Heaven, warned those who survive, to repentance, in a more direct and solemn manner, than any other city on this continent has ever experienced, since its settlement by Europeans.**

IF repentance does not succeed this judgment, can we suppose it will not be renewed? perhaps with tenfold vengeance! REFORMATION OR DESTRUCTION! TURN OR DIE! is, I believe, the emphatical language of heaven, to us, at this time!

GOD has clearly pointed out to the inhabitants of this city, their duty: Neither the means of knowledge, nor knowledge itself is wanting. He has favoured us with his written word and holy Spirit; all that is wanting is a heart to fear and obey the Lord.

OUR heavenly Father has not been inattentive to our salvation—to allure us into the pleasing paths of virtue—to deter us from the dangerous avenues of vice—he has, in the one hand, held out every blessing; in the other, every woe—in the

* According to official returns, on 9th mo. (September) 28th, 106 persons died—which, considering the very few inhabitants remaining in the city, perhaps not one tenth part of what remained in 1793, may be accounted the greatest mortality ever known, by Americans, in this country.

the one, all prosperity; in the other, every adversity—in the one, blooming joy; in the other, wan despair!

AROUND him, in thronged succession wait, impatient to know and obey his will, dread ministers of heaven, armed with every element, every power! to reward or punish—save or destroy.

IF the pestilence is not heard! if the language of the plague is not understood! will it not be repeated? or something more arousing to reformation! Something more sudden in attack! more alarming and universal in execution!

F I R E !

PERHAPS an angel may descend, involved in cloudy columns of dusky smoke; and by spreading combustibles unquenchable, light the “funeral pile” of Philadelphia’s glory and existence! Or

A D E L U G E !

By some commissioned spirit, descending o’er the deep, with a wand, more potent than that waved by Moses, overwhelm this city, and all its guilty inhabitants, in one common watery grave! Or

A H U R R I C A N E,

SWIFTLY descending, urged on, and fiercely driven by some serenely indignant seraph, borne in awful sublimity of state, on whirling wings, of Northern airy forces—sweeping with impetuous deluging tempests—charged with incessant peals of the deepest toned thunder—preceded by widely expanded sheets and streams of heaven's avenging flashes of vivid lightning—before which the lofty spires bend—airy turrets bow—human grandeur lays low—and the effects of sin and sinners, compose one general ruin! Or

AN E A R T H Q U A K E!

WHEN earth, groaning from its inmost caverns, quaking with horror, of its impious load, is permitted, by an angry God, to execute his vengeance, expanding wide its voracious jaws, draws in, in one dire fated moment, Philadelphians and Philadelphia, to its centre. Or

W A R!

WHEN men, naturally feeble and wicked as ourselves, may be permitted by the Almighty, for our sins, and our destruction, to be disarmed of humanity, in all but vice and shape, to unite the subtilty of the Fox, with the fierceness of the Tiger, and the strength and courage of the Lion
armed

—armed in dread vengeance with insatiable thirst for despotic power, and human blood ! Led by unbounded ambition to gain universal empire and dominion, should assail our borders by land and water, in one day, and with every cruelty and every horror; planned in hell, or done on earth —destroy men, women and children, and razing the buildings to their foundations, not leaving one stone upon another; and in the centre of its desolation erect a monument with this inscription, as a warning to mankind, in all succeeding ages, against sin :

HERE PHILADELPHIA STOOD.

UNDER the assault of one of these judgments, or some, or all of them united, the once famed city Philadelphia, being

“ Like an exile, from a father’s care,
Deliver’d o’er to darkness and despair.”

PERHAPS may be viewed by some sympathizing friend, standing at a distance, in an agony of despair, uttering a language, somewhat after this manner :

“ OH Philadelphia ! thou that hast passed through so many dispensations of mercy and judgment, would to God thou hadst known, even thou in thy day the things that belonged to thy peace; but now they are forever hid from thine eyes.”

BUT

BUT, if no general, no lasting reformation should prevail, and none of the judgments mentioned should follow, much as pestilence, fire, deluges, hurricanes, earthquakes, war, and other calamities similar unto them, are to be dreaded: Yet there remains one judgment unmentioned, more to be feared than all the others, separately or jointly considered: I mean a being left of God to ourselves.

WRETCHED indeed! is that individual, or that community, whose sins are suffered to pass long unpunished, without repentance! Though the world and all around may seem to smile, and every thing for the present appear agreeable, yet sooner or later, it will be found an important and interesting truth, that while sin remains unreformed, and unrepented of, and the heart undevoted to, and estranged from God, we are in that broad way which leads to destruction; the breadth and smoothness whereof, and the numbers and gaiety of those who are passing therein, will make but poor amends for the final destructive consequences that will inevitably ensue.

OH! faith my soul, and all that is living within me, let none put off the necessary, the All important work of repentance and reformation, to what they may vainly suppose a convenient season! The call for instant and effectual attention to these duties, is pressing beyond expression.

As,

As being in the immediate presence of my Maker, and, I trust, under the influence and direction of his Holy Spirit, I feel it my indispensable duty, at this time, and in this way, most solemnly to declare it to be my clear and full belief, that this city, if not reformed, will in all probability, eventually be destroyed.

EMBRACING, in the arms of faith and love, every individual inhabitant of this extensive city, and humbly prostrating before the throne of divine grace, with the deepest awe, and most profound veneration, my soul breathes forth fervent supplications to the most high! that he would graciously be pleased, to enable us all to examine our ways and doings, and in the goodness and abundance of his infinite mercy, for the sake of his dear Son our blessed saviour and redeemer, assist us in every needful time, to repent and reform of whatever we have done amiss; that so, we may be received into his favour, and all tokens of his displeasure, in future, be averted; and the prosperity and happiness of this our beloved city, be placed and secured upon that only sure foundation, acceptance with God, through Jesus Christ.

A M E N.

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